

House Resolution 1637

By: Representatives Hill of the 180th, Hatfield of the 177th, Shaw of the 176th, Borders of the 175th, and Smith of the 168th

A RESOLUTION

1 Dedicating the Okefenokee Trail; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, the Okefenokee is a vast bog inside a huge, saucer shaped depression that was
3 once part of the ocean floor. Peat deposits, up to 15 feet thick, cover much of the swamp
4 floor. These deposits are so unstable in spots that one can cause trees and surrounding bushes
5 to tremble by stomping the surface. In fact, Okefenokee is a European rendition of the Indian
6 words meaning "land of the trembling earth"; and

7 WHEREAS, the slow-moving waters of the Okefenokee are tea-colored from the tannic acid
8 released by decaying vegetation. The principal outlet of the swamp, the Suwannee River,
9 originates in the heart of the Okefenokee and drains southwest into the Gulf of Mexico. The
10 swamp's southeastern drainage to the Atlantic Ocean is the St. Mary's River, which forms
11 the boundary between Georgia and Florida; and

12 WHEREAS, the swamp contains numerous islands and lakes, along with vast areas of
13 nonforested terrain. Prairies cover about 60,000 acres of the swamp. Once forested, these
14 expanses of marsh were created during periods of severe drought when fires burned out
15 vegetation and the top layers of peat. The prairies harbor a variety of wading birds: herons,
16 egrets, ibises, cranes, and bitterns; and

17 WHEREAS, the swamp remains one of the oldest and most well-preserved fresh-water areas
18 in America. In all, the swamp covers an area of 38 miles north to south and 25 miles east to
19 west; and

20 WHEREAS, the swamp is a vital part of the cultural heritage of this state and an important
21 part of the local economy in that it attracts tourists from all over the world.

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
2 GEORGIA that there is dedicated the Okefenokee Trail as follows:

- 3 (1) That portion of State Route 38/U.S. Highway 84 from Valdosta to Waycross;
- 4 (2) State Route 4/U.S. Highway 1/23 from Waycross to its juncture with State Route
5 23/U.S. Highway 301;
- 6 (3) State Route 23/U.S. Highway 301 from the junction with State Route 4/U.S. Highway
7 23 to Folkston;
- 8 (4) State Route 177 from its junction with State Route 4/U.S. Highway 23 to
9 Okefenokee;
- 10 (5) State Route 40 from Folkston to Kingsland;
- 11 (6) State Route 121 from Folkston to the Florida border;
- 12 (7) State Route 89/U.S. Highway 441 from Homerville to Edith;
- 13 (8) State Route 94 from Edith to the Florida border; and
- 14 (9) State Route 177 from Fargo to the Stephen C. Foster State Park.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation is authorized and
16 directed to remove signs designating the Okefenokee Parkway and to place and maintain
17 appropriate markers designating the Okefenokee Trail.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
19 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the Department of
20 Transportation.